

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJECT: RYAN OPTS FOR PARTY ORGANIZATION OVER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SEAT

1. CLAUDE RYAN, NEW QUEBEC LIBERAL PARTY CHIEF, ANNOUNCED
YESTERDAY THAT HE WILL NOT REPEAT NOT CONTEST THE BYELECTION
FOR THE NDG SEAT OPENED BY BRYCE MACKASEY'S RECENT RESIGNATION.

2. AFTER SEVERAL WEEKS' CONSIDERATION REMINISCENT OF HIS
PRO-AND-CON STUDIES BEFORE UNDERTAKING LEADERSHIP RACE, RYAN
OPTED FOR SPENDING SUMMER BUILDING UP PARTY RATHER THAN SITTING
IN ASSEMBLY. (LOBERAL WIN BELIEVED CERTAIN IN NDG.) HE DENIED
SPECULATION HE WAS HOPING TO RUN IN MAISONNEUVE, IF ROBERT BURNS
IS ELEVATED TO THE BENCH, OR OF RUNNING IN ANY OTHER RIDING
"AT LEAST FOR SEVERAL MONTHS."

3. RYAN ACKNOWLEDGED NDG'S DEMOGRAPHY (70 PERCENT ANGLOPHONE)
WAS A FACTOR BUT DENIED IT WAS THE MAJOR FACTOR IN HIS DECISION.
PREMIER LEVESQUE HAS BEEN ALLEGING THAT RYAN ELECTED TO LEADERSHIP
BY ANGLOPHONE SUPPORT, A CHARGE RYAN CALLS "RACIST."
NONETHELESS, RYAN DREW DISTINCTION BETWEEN "ORDINARY
CANDIDATES" RUNNING WITHOUT CONSIDERATION OF LINGUISTIC
MAKEUP OF A RIDING AND POSITION OF PARTY LEADER WHO HAS
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"GOT TO CONSIDER ALL KINDS OF OBJECTIONS AND DIFFICULTIES
WHICH MIGHT BE RAISED." AS LEADER HE HOPES HAVE LATER
OPPORTUNITY TO RUN IN A RIDING WHOSE ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION
WILL BE BETTER CROSS-SAMPLE OF THE POPULATION OF QUEBEC.

4. RYAN ALSO PRODUCED BREAKDOWN OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR
LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGN SHOWING 77 PERCENT FROM FRANCOPHONE,

23 PERCENT FROM ANGLOPHONE (I.E., NON-FRANCOPHONE) SOURCES AND ANNOUNCED THAT SURPLUS FUNDS RAISED (DOLS 172,000) WILL BE USED TO START A FOUNDATION TO GRANT SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDYING CANADIAN FEDERALISM.

5. COMMENT: DECISION UNDOUBTEDLY WISE BUT COULD HAVE BEEN MADE SOONER. WHATEVER THE MERITS OF "BUILDING THE PARTY," NDG WAS NOT REPEAT NOT THE RIGHT RIDING FOR RYAN. MOREOVER, HE WILL ALMOST UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO GET IN AND LEARN PARLIAMENTARY ROPES (WHICH SHOULDN'T TAKE HIM LONG) PRIOR GENERAL ELECTION IN 1980. ONLY REAL QUESTION, THEREFORE, NOT WHAT THE DECISION WAS BUT WHY IT TOOK SO LONG TO ANNOUNCE IT. HARPER

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